



### Neighbor Islands: We Want to Hear from You

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The recent census showed that the 1,211,537 population total in 2000 in the State of Hawaii represented a 9.3% increase over the 1,108,229 reported in 1990. Gary A. Fuller, population studies director at the University of Hawaii-Manoa said the big winners in this population increase were the neighbor island counties, which recorded double-digit population growths. Maui County showed 27.6% growth from the last census in 1990, while Hawaii County grew by 23.6%. Kauai County spiked 14.2 % during the same period, while Honolulu County only inched up a modest 4.8%. "It was kind of strange," Fuller added, "because, of course, for decades the neighbor islands have been losing relative to Honolulu".<sup>1</sup>

While it is too early to identify this diaspora as a megatrend, the growth of health care requirements throughout the island chain is assured by the State's aging population and exportability of Hawaii's highly regarded health services to emerging economies in Asia and the Pacific Islands. Indeed, almost as many people are currently employed in health services as in the hotel industry, 38.4% of these employed by hospitals alone.<sup>2</sup>

There are 30 hospitals in Hawaii, 17 in Honolulu County, 4 in Maui County, 6 in Hawaii County, and 3 in Kauai County. Five County Medical Societies (Honolulu, Hawaii, West Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai) sponsor a variety of meetings, continuing education presentations, community outreach initiatives, clinical and basic research investigations, and related activities in these hospitals and elsewhere in each County. The Hawaii Medical Association (HMA) is the parent organization for Hawaii's five component medical societies.

Our Editor has pointed out that the *Hawaii Medical Journal (HMJ)* is the voice of the HMA, the entire HMA, and of its five component medical societies. As such, we not only invite, but encourage regular reports for *HMJ* publication of meetings and other activities at each of the many hospitals and other medical facilities throughout the State. I will be in contact in the next several weeks with County society, hospital, and other health care proponents to see how we can make this objective a reality.

#### References

1. Omandam Pat, "Maui leads neighbor isles' double-digit population boom", *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, March 20, 2001.
2. Bank of Hawaii, *Hawaii Annual Economic Report*, 2003.



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